

## How to File a Complaint about USDA Donated Commodities

USDA makes every effort to ensure that commodities provided through the Food Distribution Program are nutritious and of the highest quality. However, as in food business, recipients may encounter a few problems such as foreign matter in canned green beans or inferior spaghetti packaging. When this happens, recipients may file a complaint. Some States prefer to have such complaints go through the State Distributing Agency (check with your State Agency); otherwise send them directly to the Food Distribution Division four different ways:

1. Commodity Complaint Hotline 1-800-446-6991
2. Email: [USDA-FNS-CommodityComplaints@FNS.USD.GOV](mailto:USDA-FNS-CommodityComplaints@FNS.USD.GOV)
3. Fax: (703) 305-1410 or (703) 305-2420 or
4. Regular mail:  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Service  
Food Distribution Division  
3101 Park Center Drive  
Alexandria, VA 22302

You should provide the following information:

- A description of the problem
- Date the product was received
- Location of the product
- How much product is involved
- Contract number (may be stenciled on the outer carton)
- Notice to Deliver Number (ND)
- Delivery Order Number (D/O)

The ND and D/O may be on the paperwork you received with the commodity, or you can contact your State Agency or Warehouse to obtain it. If you can only get one of these numbers, the D/O is the most helpful. USDA needs the D/O to determine which vendor produced the product and resolves the complaint to the satisfaction of the recipient. It will look like this:

A358122C054  
B037156D006

The D/O provides a lot of information and it breaks down like this:

- A358 and B037 are the commodity code. Each commodity has its own commodity code. For example, A358 is a unique code that USDA uses to identify apricots, sliced and frozen, and shipped in 20-pound boxes.
- The next three digits (122 and 156 in our examples) indicate the State. The 156 in the second D/O indicates that the shipment went to Wyoming. Each State has a different number. Indian Tribal Organizations or other agencies within a State may also have different numbers.
- The letter (C or D) designates the year the product was shipped.
- The last three numbers indicate the specific delivery to your State.

If you are seeking a replacement, you should keep the product until you have been notified what to do with it.

**COMPLAINT INFORMATION**  
**USDA Donated Commodities**

**Recipient Agency Name** \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_

**Commodity Name** \_\_\_\_\_

Delivery Order No. \_\_\_\_\_ Contract No. \_\_\_\_\_

Notice to Deliver No. \_\_\_\_\_

Lot No. \_\_\_\_\_ Box No. \_\_\_\_\_ Pack Date \_\_\_\_\_ Can Codes \_\_\_\_\_

Vendor \_\_\_\_\_

Date Shipped \_\_\_\_\_ Received \_\_\_\_\_ Qty \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Commodity \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Remaining/on hold \_\_\_\_\_

Is Product Under Warranty? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Description of Problem** (Amount damaged and how)

**Action Sought**

Replacement \_\_\_\_\_ Notify Vendor \_\_\_\_\_

Vendor Response \_\_\_\_\_ For information only \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: Please call your State Distributing Agency, if necessary, to complete your Commodity Complaint Information form before calling the USDA Commodity Complaint Hotline number 1-800-446-6991. You may also fax the form to the Food Distribution Division at (703) 305-2721.**